



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS Announces the Availability of an Issues and Options Presentation and Scoping Meetings for Management of Atlantic Shark Fisheries

Based on the 2007 stock assessment for small coastal sharks (SCS), NMFS believes the implementation of new management measures via an amendment to the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is necessary to rebuild blacknose sharks while providing for sustainable shark fisheries.

On May 7, 2008 (73 FR 25665), NMFS published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to amend the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP, including an Environmental Impact Statement, which included summary information on the recent SCS stock assessment, announced NMFS' determination of blacknose sharks, and requested comments from the public on possible options for management of shark fisheries.

An issues and options presentation, which describes potential management measures that may be included in the upcoming Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP, is now available on the HMS website (<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>). Besides issues related to SCS, NMFS is also scoping on issues related to other species (e.g., common thresher, hammerheads, ragged tooth, smooth dogfish, and deepwater sharks) as well as improved compliance with HMS regulations, enhanced Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), dealer reporting requirements, and quota monitoring. NMFS will be holding four scoping meetings to attain comments from the public on shark management measures (see the attached table for times and locations).

NMFS will also present the issues and options presentation to the five Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions at their meetings during the public comment period. Please see their meeting notices for times and locations. NMFS also expects to present the issues and options presentation at the fall 2008 HMS Advisory Panel (AP) meeting. The actual date and location of the HMS AP meeting will be announced in a future Federal Register notice.

The comment period for the NOI has been extended to **5 p.m. on October 31, 2008**. Comments can be submitted to Karyl Brewster-Geisz, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please mark the outside of the envelope "Scoping Comments on Amendment 3 to Consolidated HMS FMP." Comments can also be submitted via e-mail at SCS_Scoping@noaa.gov, or via FAX at (301) 713-1917.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic Shark Fisheries interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such a notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Michael Clark or Jessica Beck at (301) 713-2347, or Jackie Wilson at (240) 338-3936.

for Emily Menashes
Alan Rishhoover
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

JUL 2 2008

Date



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Table 1. Time and Locations of the four scoping meetings.

Date	Time	Meeting Locations	Address
7/30/08	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Freeport Branch Library	410 Brazosport Boulevard, Freeport, TX 77541
8/27/08	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office	263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701
8/28/08	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Fort Pierce Library	101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce, FL 34950
10/9/08	3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	NOAA Fisheries Service, Northeast Regional Office	1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930